



Education

# Anti-bullying Plan

Kenthurst Public School





# Bullying:

## Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

### Bullying

**Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.**

**Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.**

**Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.**

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

The term “bullying” has a specific meaning. The school’s Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

**School staff** have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

**Students** have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

**Parents and caregivers** have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

**All members of the school community** have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school’s Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

# Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales Department of Education.

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the New South Wales Department of Education (DoE) “Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy”.

This document will be evaluated annually and formally reviewed every three years.

## Statement of purpose

### Key beliefs

Kenthurst Public School students fully engage in high quality teaching and learning practices which are specifically designed to assist them to develop pro-social skills and academic competencies. These attributes will enable them to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour, and ultimately allow students to engage with, and contribute to the wider Australian community.

For students to positively engage in the educational opportunities at Kenthurst Public School they each have an absolute right to learn in an environment where they feel, and are safe, and free from any form of harassment or intimidation.

### Principles

Any inappropriate behaviour that inhibits another student’s right to learn or otherwise interferes with their well-being **cannot and will not be accepted**.

Kenthurst Public School (KPS) is committed to providing a safe and caring environment which fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying. At Kenthurst Public School we will:

- create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report incidents of bullying
- create a culture for the bully to recognise their behaviour and how to deal with it
- empower students by listening to their experiences and allowing them to feel that they can be in control of what happens to them at school.

Kenthurst Public School provides a safe place for students to learn and play. Evidence supporting this will be:

- an increase in the number of students who report bullying behaviour
- the incidence of bullying behaviours being reduced due to early intervention and reporting
- better attendance at school
- improved performance in school work.

Kenthurst Public School staff will utilise the plan and procedures as set out in the Anti-bullying plan;

Kenthurst Public School students will use strategies and procedures as set out in the plan and taught by staff in the classroom;

Parents will recognise and support the school’s Anti-bullying plan.

## Protection

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is defined as repeatedly hurting another person who is less powerful-either physically or psychologically. Bullying can take many forms. We consider the following behaviour to be bullying:

#### 1. **Physical**

including hitting, punching, shoving, pinching, tripping, spitting, scratching, damaging, hiding or stealing belongings or throwing objects at someone.

#### 2. **Verbal**

name-calling, making offensive remarks, taunting, teasing, put-downs

#### 3. **Indirect social / psychological**

spreading rumours, gossiping about or embarrassing someone, making fun of someone, using threatening looks or gestures, excluding or threatening to exclude from groups, ignoring, ostracising or alienating.

#### 4. **Cyber (online bullying)**

verbal and indirect social/psychological bullying through use of technology such as emails, SMS, blogs, websites, social media etc

### Bullying behaviour typically contains seven elements

1. An initial desire to hurt
2. Bullying desire is acted out; some form of bullying is perpetrated
3. This action is hurtful
4. There is an imbalance of power; the bullying behaviour is stronger and more powerful than the victim's behaviour, either physically or psychologically
5. There is no justification for the action (i.e. the victim has done nothing to deserve such treatment)
6. It is persistent and repeated
7. The person bullying derives enjoyment from hurting the victim.

## Strategies we will use to deal with bullying

All public schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. ***The Kenthurst Public School community will not accept bullying behaviour at our school.*** Bullying can be frightening, physically and emotionally damaging when experienced.

Kenthurst Public School staff promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity amongst the whole school community. All staff members are committed to actively collaborating together to eliminate and resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when and if they occur.

### At Kenthurst Public School we will:

- Openly and regularly talk about bullying - what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it. This discussion will be supported in our Bounce Back lessons. We will display bullying posters in all classrooms and constantly refer to them when discussing bullying with the students.
- Teach our students the skills build their self-esteem and empower them to take the responsibility for themselves and give them the opportunity to practise these skills.
- Regularly educate staff to ensure they understand how to recognise bullying and implement strategies to support students who are being bullied.

### School staff have a responsibility to:

- Recognise, intervene and take action when incidents occur
- Educate students about bullying and give clear messages about what behaviours are accepted
- Inform parents of related policies and incidents
- Provide support, discipline, mediation and responsive action to the victim, bully and bystanders.
- Be proactive and model non aggressive management
- Talk about bullying - definitions, clarify misunderstandings of what constitutes bullying and strategies.

### Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school. **In the first instance parents are to contact the classroom teacher then the stage supervisor.**
- Monitor their children and support them to become sensible and responsible digital citizens
- Maintain open dialogue with the school in order to work collaboratively to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur
- Communicate with their children in order to assist in their understanding of bullying behaviour
- Participate in reviews of the school's student welfare policy
- Accept a shared responsibility for the development of appropriate social behaviour in their children.

### Students have a responsibility to:

- Recognise and report bullying behaviour
- Support others and behave responsibly as bystanders
- Behave appropriately and follow our school expectations (Respect, Responsibility, Personal Best) and values in order to respect individual differences
- Behave as responsible digital citizens.

## Prevention

At Kenthurst Public School anti-bullying messages are embedded into each curriculum area and in every year level through the "Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL)" matrix (that contains rules, values and expectations) which are explicitly taught and reinforced throughout the year, allowing for new students to be catered for.

- Lessons developed Kindergarten to Year 6 (K-6) relate to expectations & values.
- Revisited at the start of each term.
- Revisited on a daily/weekly basis during the term as the need arises.

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The key to Anti-bullying interventions is to address all parties involved, that is the bully, victim and bystander. Proactive strategies might include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Model non aggressive approaches to behaviour management
- Remove opportunities for bullying to occur – arrive on time, group formations, positive reinforcement, structuring activities
- Talk about bullying – definitions, clarify misunderstandings, etc
- Give clear messages about what behaviours are accepted
- Display positive classroom posters, encourage reporting and empathy
- Welcome new students, engage all students in conversation
- Provide anti bullying resilience through Circle Time.
- Discuss behaviour support at PBL meetings (bullying incidents)
- Social skills taught in the classroom and by LAST.

### Strategies to support bullied students

- Teach resolution skills and procedures to avoid anger responses
- Teach assertiveness skills through Circle Time.
- Conflict resolution skills
- Develop a shared concern & plans of action to support these students
- Provide a support service to students to share their story with a trained adult
- Provide time out or quiet areas
- Consistently attempt to build self esteem
- Social skills
- Student leadership
- Conflict resolution
- Playground programs
- Mentoring
- Transition

- Peer tutoring/co-operative learning
- Teach students how to be resilient

### Strategies to support students who bully

- Clearly state expected behaviours
- Build self esteem
- Look for warning signs
- Implement consequences for bullying behaviour
- Provide students with counselling
- Teach and develop self-monitoring skills – behaviour chart, etc
- Teach problem solving skills
- Cooperative learning strategies
- Teachers as Mentor for student
- Social skills program used in the reflection (blue) room
- Building an understanding of social responsibility
- Working in partnership with parents to support these strategies

### Playground supervision

The role of staff in playground supervision is very important in recognising and responding to incidents of bullying. Monitoring playground hot spots, encouraging isolated students to join a group, reminding children about strategies to manage playground conflict, giving appropriate strategies other than “ignoring it and walking away” and following through on reported incidents can all help to reduce bullying. Bullying reports need to be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

### Dealing with a bullying incident

Bullying cannot be reduced if incidents are not reported. When a bullying incident has occurred, the following strategies will be employed.

- Restorative Practices questioning process employed
- Logical consequences applied (as per the PBL behaviour management flowchart)
- Consequences as outlined in school Student Discipline Policy
- Individual student management plan developed when bullying is consistent and persistent

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### Role of teachers receiving a report of bullying

- determine whether report is of bullying, poor social skills or rule breaking- this may be a one off situation or an ongoing one. The teacher deals with the incident using the above strategies.
- record details, noting details of incident, victim and others involved, on a timeout slip or playground referral form
- give information to classroom teacher and/or stage supervisor for further follow up
- information recorded on the LMBR ebs4 student management system.
- Parents informed when incidents of bullying persist

Respond to substantiated instances of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's discipline and welfare policy and all relevant NSW Department of Education (DoE) policies and procedures.

### All staff have a responsibility to:

- model appropriate behaviours at all times
- teach students skills and strategies to deal with bullying as per the lessons distributed to staff in their PBL folders
- deal with all reported and observed incidences of bullying as set out in this plan and the school's discipline policy
- ensure that students are supervised at all times
- report incidences of bullying to the Assistant Principals or Principal consistent with school welfare reporting procedures
- create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report incidents.

### All staff have the absolute responsibility of a ‘Duty of Care’ to all students at all times.

### All students have a responsibility to:

- be assertive – tell the ‘bully’ that they don’t like the behaviour, how it makes them feel and that they must tell a teacher about it if the person continues
- see a classroom teacher first or the teacher on duty, then stage supervisor and then the Principal if the perpetrator/s do continue

- 'tell' if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied-both at school or on the way to and from school
- report any cyber-bullying to their teacher or Principal (do not delete any emails and make note of any websites)
- ask to see the Stage supervisor directly to report incidences of bullying if the teacher is busy with other playground issues, or if they would prefer to do so
- help someone who is being bullied
- not bully others.

#### **All parents/caregivers have a responsibility to:**

- watch for signs their child may be being bullied or using bullying behaviours
- speak with the classroom teacher at Kenthurst Public School if they suspect their child is being bullied or using bullying behaviours
- instruct their children to 'tell' if they are bullied
- Participate in discussions to address behaviours
- Be informed and familiar with strategies and policies on the Department of Education and Kenthurst Public School websites.

#### **Prevention: cyber-bullying**

In relation to cyber-bullying, students and the community are also educated through newsletter snippets and articles that they can: Guard their contact information (i.e. only give your mobile phone number, instant messaging name or e-mail address to trusted friends and don't share passwords) and keep a note of who you've given it to. Consider using caller ID blocking to hide your phone number when making calls. Similarly, don't leave your name on your voicemail. Don't give your details to people you don't know – or don't want to know!

Take a stand against cyber-bullying (i.e. speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online). Most people respond better to criticism from their peers than to disapproval from adults.

Protective strategies for parents:

#### **1. Talk to your child**

Discuss online safety and reassure your child that you are there to help if they need it.

#### **2. Provide safe and supervised access**

Keep your family computer in a high traffic area so you can keep an eye on your child's technology use.

Install safety software on your computer (e.g. anti-virus, spy ware, a firewall and filters).

#### **3. Monitor technology use**

Take an interest in what your child is doing online and with all technology (I-pads, I-pods, I-phones etc). Remind your child of 'stranger danger', they might think they are talking to another child but it could be an adult.

#### **At school**

If you are aware of school-related bullying issues, encourage your child to notify a trusted adult at school or notify the school yourself.

#### **Offensive websites**

If you are concerned about offensive websites, contact the Australian Communications and Media Authority and they will investigate the matter.

#### **Report harassment and threats**

Report incidents of online harassment to your local police and your Internet Service Provider (ISP)

If your child is bullied through a mobile phone, report the problem to your phone service provider and local police. They can help you block messages or calls from certain senders.

## Early Intervention

Interventions require the ongoing education of students to develop skills and strategies to allow them to identify, cope with and prevent bullying occurring. The key to anti-bullying interventions is to address all parties involved, that is the bully, victim and bystander.

Strategies and programs that Kenthurst Public School will implement for the following students:

### **Students identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships:**

- Social skills lessons
- Ongoing discussions/ class talks
- Role play/workshops
- PBL value lessons
- Develop conflict resolution skills
- Provide a supervised safe haven (library)

### **Students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour:**

- Build self-esteem and empower children
- Teachers as mentor – “Check In teacher”
- Provide students with consulting
- Implement consequences for bullying behaviour.

At Kenthurst Public School the strategies listed below will be implemented to maintain a positive climate of safe, respectful and responsible behaviour where bullying is less likely to occur:

- Continue positive student welfare programs (e.g. Cooperative Learning)
- Maintain buddy programs across the school (e.g. Buddy classes and peer tutoring)
- Celebrate the diversity of all students through multicultural and celebration days
- Continue to provide social skill programs that build the self-esteem of all students

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- Empower students in the classroom through teaching assertiveness, conflict resolution and anger management skills
- Develop a shared concern and listen to students, provide safe havens and counselling
- Look for warning signs and implement consequences for bullying behaviour.

## Response

The Kenthurst Public School community will not accept bullying behaviour at our school. Bullying can be frightening, physically and emotionally damaging when experienced.

The staff at Kenthurst Public School promotes positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity amongst the whole school community. All staff members are committed to actively collaborating together to eliminate and resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when and if they occur.

The DoE provides a policy and guidelines for handling complaints, the Complaints Handling Policy. While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee, student or community member, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint.

The DoE seeks to resolve difficulties, grievances and complaints in a prompt, impartial and just manner. Staff at Kenthurst will follow the procedures and guidelines recommended by the DoE, where necessary, when dealing with bullying complaints.

Strategies our school will use to identify patterns of bullying behaviour:

- Encourage children and parents to report any incidents of bullying behaviour
- Teacher/executive intervention occurs where student/s are counselled and parents are contacted

- Incident recorded on Kenthurst Public School LMBR ebs4 student management system
- Any unresolved or ongoing issues may require:
  - Principal intervention
  - Parent interview
  - Counsellor intervention / support services
  - Reflection (blue) room
  - Suspension

**Any form of physical bullying will result in a suspension warning or immediate suspension as per DoE Suspension Policy**

**Procedures for reporting incidents of bullying at Kenthurst Public School include:**

- incident needs to be reported to a teacher or stage supervisor
- all students involved will be spoken to
- incident will be recorded on a behaviour referral form and then on the LMBR ebs4 student management system
- consequences will depend on the nature of the incident
- Procedures and Anti-bullying plan will be publicised on our school's website.
- Incidents of bullying will be dealt with promptly in accordance to our Anti-bullying plan.

**Reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment**

- Report all incidents in the first instance to the Police and then the School Safety Response Hotline on 1300 363 778
- Contact Castle Hill Police in case of critical incidents on 02 9680 5399

**Procedures the school will use with regard to contacting the Child Wellbeing Unit:**

- Principal or Executive member will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit on 02 9269 9400 in case of serious incidents

**Procedures and Information about the Complaints Handling Policy**

The NSW Department of Education seek to resolve difficulties, grievances and complaints in a prompt, impartial and just manner.

The department's internet site provides information for parents, TAFE students and the general public.

The Complaints Handling Policy provides information for handling complaints including how to make a complaint, how to deal with a complaint and how to support the people involved.

This policy can be found at: [www.dec.nsw.gov.au](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au)

**Responding to reported incidence of bullying**

- Children involved (victim, bystanders and bully) speak with classroom teacher first then Assistant Principal or Principal about the incident. They will be informed about the process of dealing with incidents of bullying.
- Victims of bullying will be given support and will have access to school counsellor if the need exists or the student so requests it.
- If bullying is reported by a parent/s they will be issued with a copy of the Anti-bullying plan and informed of the process of dealing with the incident. All parents will be kept up to date with the process.
- If clearly substantiated, and depending on the nature of the incident, the student responsible for bullying is issued with a letter for the incident and is warned of the consequences for further incidences. Depending on the stage supervisor's decision, the student may have to spend time in the reflection room

- If it is noted that a student is repeatedly perpetrating bullying behaviours, a behaviour management plan will be developed for him/her in consultation with his/her parents to modify behaviour and reduce risk to other students. Information will be passed on to the Learning Support Team for review.
- In the case of cyber-bullying initiated through school accounts, the student may have their DoE account blocked for a period determined by the Principal-subsequent consequences for this behaviour determined in line with the school's discipline policy
- Inform all staff of the incident
- Monitor the behaviour of the children involved
- If the child continues to bully, make an appointment to speak to the parent/carer. Remind them of the policy and ask for their cooperation in stopping the child from bullying other students and seek outside intervention.
- If bullying behaviour does not stop, student may be suspended as per the school discipline policy.

### Reporting instances of cyber-bullying

If students are being harassed online they are encouraged to take the following actions immediately:

- Tell an adult they trust. This can be a teacher, parent, older sibling or grandparent – someone who can help them do something about it
- Leave the area or stop the activity. People who bully get their kicks from knowing they've upset their target. Don't let them know they've upset you, and you've taken away half their 'fun'. Easier said than done when it's face-to-face, but if it's on your mobile or the Internet — easy!
- Block the sender's messages. If they are being bullied through e-mail or instant messaging, block the sender's messages. Never reply to harassing messages
- Keep a record. Save any harassing messages and record the time and date that you received them
- Advise their Service Provider. Most service providers have appropriate use policies that restrict users from harassing others. They can respond to reports of cyber-bullying over their networks,

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or help you track down the appropriate service provider to respond to

- Report to police. If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police. Some people think that they can get away with it because they believe it is anonymous. They are wrong. Most can be traced and it's a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any form of communication to menace or harass or offend another person.

### Our school will promote and publicise this plan by:

- Presenting it at the P&C Annual General Meeting every year
- Presenting it to new families through the Kindergarten orientation, Stage information evenings and school information packages
- Having a link on the school website
- Through the school newsletter – providing a message to parents that a copy of the policy is available for them to read, through the school office and on the school website and a place reminder on the App

### Our school will monitor and evaluate this plan by:

Monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our school Anti bullying plan is important. Formal evaluations will be conducted every three years, as part of developing and reviewing our new school plans. The relevance and effectiveness of the school's practices, policies and teaching and learning programs will be reviewed. Parents and caregivers will be invited to attend all policy reviews.

In terms of this policy the following questions are examples of how the evaluation process will be structured:

- Is the policy clearly understood by all members of the school community?
- Is the policy meeting the needs of students and effectively eliminating bullying behaviour?
- Does the policy reflect and align with current Department of Education policies?
- How positive and effective are the relationships between staff, parents and students?

- Has staff development been sufficient to meet the needs and requirements of this policy?

## Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officers (YLO) are responsible for delivering safety talks at schools, delivering cautions and referring children and young people to youth justice conferences.

There is a Police YLO at each of the Local Area Commands across NSW.

Castle Hill Police Station is open 24 hours and they are located at Cnr Castle & Pennant Streets CASTLE HILL 2154.

Phone: 02 9680 5399. Fax: 02 9680 5303

Email: [pate2rob@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:pate2rob@police.nsw.gov.au)

School Youth Liaison Officer (YLO). Constable Rob Paterson, Castle Hill Police Station

Kids Helpline is available 24 hours, 7 days a week. It provides online [www.kidshelp.com.au/kids](http://www.kidshelp.com.au/kids) or phone counselling for children.

Ph – 1800 55 1800

Additional information, resources and support relating to effective anti-bullying strategies can be found at:

1. Bullying. No way! [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)
2. Reach Out! [www.kidshelpline.com.au](http://www.kidshelpline.com.au)
3. Bullying Among Young Children: A guide for parents by the Australian [www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au)

## Principal's comment

The Kenthurst Public School Anti-bullying Plan has been developed in consultation with key members of the school community. It is based on current DoE policies and procedures and reflects the school's Student Welfare and Discipline policy. The Positive Behaviour for Learning approach employed by the school which includes regular collection and analysis of data, consistent approaches to behavioural expectations in the classroom and playground as well as specific programs such as pro-social skills programs, have helped to develop a school culture in which bullying behaviours can be quickly identified and addressed.

## School Contact Information

### Kenthurst Public School

111 Kenthurst Road, Kenthurst 2156

Phone: 02 9654 1173

Fax: 9654 2586

School email: [kenthurst-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:kenthurst-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

School website: [www.kenthurst-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/](http://www.kenthurst-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/)